



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **State Health Department Issues Hantavirus Disease Warning**

BISMARCK, N.D. – People who are cleaning cabins or other buildings that had been closed for the winter should protect themselves against hantavirus, a disease transmitted by infected mice, according to the North Dakota Department of Health.

“Hantavirus infection has been associated with cleaning or occupying previously vacant cabins or other dwellings,” said Kirby Kruger, epidemiologist with the Department of Health. “It’s important to take precautions while cleaning buildings infested with rodents. Preventing infection is important since there is no cure for the disease.”

Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS) is a viral infection that causes severe lung disease. The virus can be transmitted to people through bites, urine and fecal droppings, but it is not transmitted from person to person.

Symptoms of HPS usually occur two to three weeks after infection. Early symptoms commonly include fever, muscle and body aches, fatigue, headache, dizziness, chills, nausea and vomiting. The illness worsens within a short period of time to include coughing, severe shortness of breath when lungs fill with fluid.

Seven cases of HPS have been reported to the North Dakota Department of Health since 1993. Four of these cases were fatal. Nationwide, 363 cases have been reported, of which 134 were fatal.

For more information, call Kirby Kruger, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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*Please note: A fact sheet containing important precautions to minimize the risk of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome infection is available at [www.nddohpressroom.gov/media/facts](http://www.nddohpressroom.gov/media/facts). To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at [www.nddohpressroom.gov](http://www.nddohpressroom.gov).*

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